

Alternate Assignment 11/9

Because you do not have your rough draft printed out/are otherwise not prepared for class, this is your alternate assignment.

Read this article and answer the questions that follow on a separate piece of paper.

Life in the villages

Most families...live in villages. Life for the villagers changes very slowly. Walking is the main form of transportation. Most don't have electricity or running water. They depend on stoves for heat and lanterns for light. If fortunate, they may have a generator for a few hours of power each day. That is, if they can afford fuel. Children fetch water from streams and wells that are often far from their homes.

The average family has eight children. One out of five children die before the age of five. Rural villages have large extended families that live in compounds behind high walls. Grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins may share the same house, which might only have three or four rooms. Families are "close," perhaps too close at times. For women, exposure to the outside world is monitored, and **not within their control**.

Villagers get up early during the growing season, so they can work the fields and tend to their cows, sheep or goats, before it becomes too hot to work. Cow dung is often used for cooking fires. Some men work as day laborers or in small market stalls. Given a choice, most farmers would not grow opium. It violates their religion. Opium is more profitable than most crops, however, and many farmers have been forced to grow poppy by drug lords and certain factions of the Taliban. Human feces are used on some farms to fertilize crops.

There are not nearly enough schools for all the children who would like to attend. Several schools provide two or three four-hour shifts to accommodate as many children as they can.

There are two to three times more boys attending school than girls. Educating girls, in some areas, is a capital offense, for which over teachers and educators have been killed. The vast majority of Afghans want girls to be allowed to go to school and be educated. As if overcoming threats by extremists weren't enough, girls are pulled out of school to get married, often against their will. Many parents are more concerned about their daughters getting a good husband over a good education

Life on the streets

For street children in Kabul, life is a daily battle to earn enough money so their families can eat. They leave their meager homes or shelters early in the morning, hoping to sell some cheap items or beg enough to survive. Most have had at least one parent killed in the war, and many are refugees. Since it is so difficult for widows to earn an income, being fatherless puts an even heavier burden on children and may force them to take to the streets as the family's breadwinner.

Each day, street children may put themselves in dangerous situations, such as approaching cars hoping for a handout or to sell sticks of gum and phone cards. Some pass a burning can of noxious fumes in front of passersby, promising to "ward off the evil" in exchange for a few coins. They may beg, sell plastic bags, look for scrap metal,

shine shoes or do whatever they can for a little change. Along the way, many are abused. They live in fear of being robbed of their paltry earnings, their freedom, and even their lives.

Life in the camps

In simple huts of hardened mud or canvas tents, thousands of Afghan families live in 30 refugee camps in and around Kabul. These informal settlements are crowded and have little access to clean water, sanitation or fuel. They have few facilities. Some residents try to improve the camps by organizing digs for latrines or trash pits. Still, health issues abound and life is difficult.

The camps provide few ways to earn a living. Most residents were farmers, an occupation they can no longer practice without access to land. In winter, the bitter cold seeps into everything.

Why do the families live in the camps? Some are refugees from Pakistan or other countries, are unable to return home to their villages because it is unsafe or their homes were destroyed. Most families have suffered traumatic losses and injuries from wars that have been waged since 1979, when the Russians invaded Afghanistan.

Article courtesy of Trust in Education: <http://www.trustededucation.org/why-afghanistan/life-in-the-villages/>

Answer the following prompts/questions in complete sentences on a separate piece of paper.

- 1. Find five vocabulary words with which you are unfamiliar, and look them up in the dictionary (found on the bookshelf in the back of the room). Write the word and the definition.**
- 2. Paraphrase the article in at least two sentences.**
- 3. In at least three sentences, summarize what life is like for Afghan children living in villages.**
- 4. In at least three sentences, describe why life on the streets is dangerous.**
- 5. Describe in at least two sentences some of the health issues people in Afghanistan face today.**
- 6. What did you know about the way many Afghan people live before reading this article? What was the most impactful thing you learned while reading? (Answer in at least two sentences.)**